

One Sheet (or Second LETTER) concerning the Difference in some Points which is between our United Brethren, in order to Accommodation.

S I R,

H Having perused the Exceptions you let me see in a Paper that Confronts Mr. Williams with the Books of others of his Brethren, which shews the Collector to be a Learned and Industrious man, and bent (I suppose) upon Reconciliation of this late Breach between them, and whose Labour therefore is Accepted, and in that generous self-denial I see in it, to be imitated: I could not choose but take my Pen, and make my Animadversions upon them in the perusal, but without producing or meddling at all with the Opposite Citations.



The Words (or Questioned Passages) of Mr Williams.

Christ, where He is called a Surety, was a Surety of a better Covenant, and therefore not of the Law of Works. For the former part of this; it is express Scripture, Heb. 7. 22. For the latter, by the Law Mr W's understands the Covenant of Works, that was made with man in Innocency requiring perfect Obedience, as the condition of Life. Now the Difference between this Covenant, and that of Grace with man Fallen, does lie in this, That the same Duty is required in both; but (speaking Largely) the one has (and so the Condition relaxed), the other had, no Mediator. And no Mediator, no Surety.

It was not a Covenant that obliged us to Die for Sin, or perfectly Obedient in a way of Merit, that He is called a Surety of. By the Better Covenant, Mr W's apprehends the Covenant of Grace, and so speaks this. But I remember these words of Mr Rutherford. The Lord Jesus hath a Room in each Covenant, that of Works, and that of Grace. I will add to it, A Room, but not Strictly as Surety of either. It is the Covenant of Redemption (the Covenant of Suretyship he calls it) that is, the Covenant between God and Christ, not the Covenant between God and Man (of Works or Grace) wherein the foundation of this Suretyship is to be laid. The excellency of Christ's Priesthood is set out by this, that it was made

by an Oath ; *The Lord hath Sworn. God hath Sworn*, can be no less than his Decree. *Hath !* When was that ? Why when God did Covenant with Christ, that he should *make his Soul an Offering for Sin* ; then was this Oath took, then was this Suretyship, Priesthood, Mediatorship constituted and established. Christ is a Surety according to this Covenant, (and of that of *Grace* upon the account only of coincidence with it.) As to the *Covenant of Works*. Christ hath this *Room*, He hath undertook to satisfy for the breach of it : And as for the *Covenant of Grace* (or *Covenant of Reconciliation*) he hath this *Room*, that by that Satisfaction (or Suffering) he hath procured it for us.

Christ can be Bound by the Covenant of which he is Surety, to no more than what we are engaged to do and suffer by the Gospel-Covenant. This calls for Mr. W's second Thoughts on what is already said. Christ is not bound by the Gospel-Covenant to any thing at all, That Covenant belongs only to us. He was bound by the *Law*, as Man, to perfect Obedience : and by his *Surety-Covenant* to suffering in regard of his Undertaking, (which was not *ex delicto*, but *ex voluntario contractu*) in our behalf. Mr. W's wont deny this, or he must explain himself.

The calling God Creditor, and Sin Debr, is Metaphorical, and using such words as proper, hath given advantage to the Socinian. This I think judiciously spoken. The ransom Christ gave for Sinners, is not properly a *Payment*, but *Satisfaction* ; that is, *Redditio æquivalentis aliter indebiti*, as *Scotus* hath defined it. If Christ was *ex ordinatione Dei*, strictly and precisely a constituted proper Surety of the *Covenant of Works*, He having performed it in our stead, we should be freed from the Penalty, and enjoy the Reward, without any terms to be required farther on our parts ; it were not just to impose any. And if he was *such a Surety* (as some would have it) of the *Covenant of Grace*, then must he perform those our terms, and so believe and repent for us, which is the true *Antinomian* consequence of it. But when he becomes a Surety only upon his Covenant with God, and so has a *Room* only, in either Covenant with Man, he hath so mediated his Work, that we are reconciled to God, and God still requires our Duty.

Though in Gal. 4. 4, 5. it is said, that Christ was made under the Law, it's not meant of the Moral, but Ceremonial Law. I have not Mr. W's Books now to examine the Quotations, but I am verily perswaded that Mr. Williams, upon recollection, and Dr. Bates, who says otherwise, and orthodoxly, will both agree in this Position

tion (Mr W's differing I guess only as to the meaning of this particular place) from another *Third*. *All Men being born under the Law, and Covenant of Works, Christ Man must be under the same*. I believe further, that both the one and the other will agree also, that *Obedience to the Moral Law was the Condition of the Covenant of works which Man Christ, as Man, was oblig'd to, that he might himself have right, jure & merito federis Operum, to Life eternal.*

There is no change of Person between Christ and the Elect, or betwixt him and Believers. Here Mr. W's must have line. He will not certainly deny but that Christ dy'd (*sepia nisi*) for us so as that it was *loco nostro*, in our stead, and allow a Commutation of Person so far, that he dying for us, we shall not therefore be damn'd ourselves: but not such a Commutation, as that we are to be reckoned to have obey'd, suffered, and satisfied in his Person, so as to be our own Redeemers; which is that he means, and being therefore at some little loss here, I will (craving his Pardon) lend him my Hand. It is not only *bono nostro*, but *loco nostro*, in our stead (as *Grotius* hath evinc'd) that Christ dy'd for Sinners. Well then. *In our stead*; that is, *Not in our Person strictly, but in the Person of a Mediator*, says Mr. Baxter: In our stead, that is, as a common Person *ex re gesta*, but not a common Person *ex fictione suppositi*, as Mr. Woodbridge hath wrung it out more elaborately from his studying the Civil Lawyers.

There is a change of the Penal sanction of the Law: the Gospel-Law doth not denounce Death for the same Sins, and for every Sin, as Adam's Law did. The words of Mr. Williams here, and Dr. Bates, are indeed plain contrary, but it is some Slip only I believe, and in the bottom sense both will reconcile easily. Distinguish we therefore with care between what the Gospel requires *sub ratione officii*, and what it requires *sub ratione conditionis*: between the Duty and the Condition of the Law of Grace, or Covenant of the Gospel. *Sub ratione officii*, the Gospel requires all that, and no less than that, the Law of Nature does (for the Law of Nature and Remedying Grace are both parts of Christ's Law, and no Sin against that, but is also a Breach of His, and makes us liable to Death): But the Gospel *sub ratione Conditionis*, requires only Sincerity, consistent with Human Frailty and Imperfection: so that when we sin against any Precept of Christ's Law, (the Law of Nature, which is founded in God's Nature, and ours being unchangeable) and thereby were *Condemnandi*, we sin not yet against it as a conditional Covenant, by non-performance. And so long as the Condition is, when the Duty is not

Of this particular Point of Commutation, I have 9 Pages on purpose against Dr. Owen, in my Book call'd *Peaceable Disquisitions*.

performed, by the Grace of that Covenant, we are pardoned and saved.

There are three things more (leaving the rest of it) wherein this Paper taxes Mr W's for differing with another of his Eminent Brethren. 1. That *Christ purchased the Covenant of Grace*. 2. That *its Condition is an antecedent Condition*. 3. That *Faith and Repentance are not Covenant Blessings*. For the first of these, I have already affirm'd it. And when the *Assembly's Confession* tells us of a *First Covenant with Adam*, of *Works*; and upon his Fall of a *Second*, of *Grace*; and that this is called a *Testament* in reference to *Christ's Death* the *Testator*, it is a Wonder to me if any United Brother, in opposition to Mr W's shall gainsay this, not withstanding what is in their *Larger Catechism*. That *Covenant* which God promises to make with the *House of Israel* in *Christ's days*, and the *Apottle* calls a *New Covenant*, is not made with the *Elect* in *Christ* from *Everlasting*. For the second, such a distinction, as of an *Antecedent Condition* and *Subsequent*, in the *Doctrine of Election*, where it is not God's foreseeing that we will believe and repent makes him chuse us, but his chusing us makes us believe and repent, may do some Service; there is indeed a *Subsequent*, no *Antecedent Condition* here: Likewise in the *Doctrine of Works*, Good Works is a *Consequent Condition* to what Faith is *Antecedent*, because Good Works do justify our Faith: But as for this Point of the *Covenant*, when we say Faith is the Condition of it (understanding it of the *Covenant of Grace* made with fallen Man), if we do not make it such a Condition as *antecedes* the Benefits, and that which being perform'd gives right to them (that we may not mince the matter), it is but trifling, to maintain that it hath any Condition at all. For the third, I pray understand these *Covenant Blessings*, of the *Gospel Covenant* (the *Covenant of Reconciliation* made with Man), and the *Absolute Promise* of the *First Grace*, or the *giving a new Heart*, to belong to the *Covenant of Redemption*, or God's Engagement to his Son, that he shall have a *Seed*, that *Nations shall be brought in*, and the like, and that therefore he will give it, (this *new Heart*, or *First Grace*) to the end that his *Elect* may in their time enter *Covenant* (the *Gospel Covenant*) with him, and not as if they were in *Covenant* before, and so God gave Faith (this *new Heart* or *First Grace*), as one of the *Benefits* of it. Understand him thus, and I apprehend the better end of the Staff to be in Mr *Williams's* Hands.

I will say no more therefore to this Paper, but I will write my
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Sheet out, for my own sake. I know, for God to require Faith on our part, to bring us into Covenant, and yet promise it, to require a Condition and yet give it, may sound strange to Human Reason: but when the Language is so frequent in Scripture, *Circumcise your Hearts, make them new, walk in my ways*, and yet the new Heart is God's Work, and it is he *causes* us to walk in them, the sound is not harsh in those Ears that are used to it. It is yet a thing something harder of digestion, to say, That God does not only give, but Christ hath purchased the Condition for the Elect by his death; and not for others, who yet are bound to the performance, or must perish, while the Gospel Covenant is preached to one as well as the other. This hath made me in my Letter to Mr W's deliver my Opinion for Universal Redemption, accounting that the First Grace, or *Condition* of the Covenant, flows from Election, and not (as the *Benefits* do) from the purchase of Christ's Redemption. Unto what I have therefore said there against the common Cry of our Divines, That Christ's Redemption must not be held such as that when the Work is done it might be possible that none might be saved, and so he dye in vain; and I have answer'd, it is but an idle Complaint, because Election takes care of that: I do now add, as glad of the occasion and room,

Nor have we need to deny to them, that Christ in his dying for *All* did intend the Salvation only of his *Elect*, for Christ being God with the Father, and having decreed from Eternity that such and such shall be saved, he must intend still what he decreed; but this draws no implication on the point, seeing there is the Intent or End of the Redeemer, which must be distinguish'd from the End of the Redemption it self. There is *Finis Operis* and *Finis Operantis*, *Finis Redemptoris* and *Finis Redemptionis*; the Intent or End of the Doer, and the End of the Work done. The End of Christ is so to dye for all the World, as that some of the World, to wit, those that believe in him, (that is the *Elect*) may be saved: The End of the Work of Redemption it self is the making satisfaction to God's Justice, so that He may in Honour, or Righteousness, deal with the World otherwise than his Law required, which is to pardon and save whom he will, and upon what terms he will. For, seeing the price of our Redemption, or Ransom which he paid (that is his Obedience unto Death) was properly a *Satisfaction* (not *debiti solutio*), which Christ therefore might chuse to lay down, and God might have refus'd to accept; the benefit we have by it is not such a present legal discharge, as in payment of a Debt where one is bound.

'bound for another, upon which there is nothing farther can be requir'd of the Debtor; but a discharge upon such terms as pleased the Father and Son to agree upon, and offer to the World by the Gospel. *And this is the Will of him that sent me, that every one that seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life.* In the Work then of Redemption it self, this is all Christ has to do, to reconcile the World to God, so as to obtain the Grant of a general Conditional Pardon: There is other Work for him to do, in regard to his Elects performing the Condition. *Him hath God exalted to be a Prince and a Saviour.* As a Priest and Saviour he did his satisfactory redeeming Work: but as a King and Saviour he gives Faith and Repentance, and upon our Repentance Remission of Sins. What! was our Lord Jesus, think you, a Man of one business? Had he but one Work from his Father to do, and now has no more? When he stray'd from his Parents at twelve years old to dispute with the Doctors, *wot you not that he was then about his Father's business?* And was that business, the Work of Redemption? What! was the work of his three Offices, King, Priest, and Prophet, all but one Work? Nay, was not the *Impetration* of our Redemption, or reconciling God to us, one Work, and the reconciling us to God and Application thereof another? He laid down his Life to Redeem us: he rose from the dead to Apply this Redemption by working in us (through the Spirit) the Condition which he requires in order to the benefits purchased; and which (*having then received all Power*) he gives forth to whom it is decreed, as the dispenser of the Treasure, of his Father's Election.

This was that, I say, he covenanted with his Father for, that performing of the Law of *Mediatorship*, as to the laying down his Life for Sinners that whosoever believes in him may be saved; he should upon his rising be exalted to this farther Office, to be Prince and Saviour, to give this Faith, or Condition, to whom he pleases, for their salvation.

That this is so, and must be so, let us consider. No Man can rationally apprehend that any benefits Christ hath purchased for him (or at least any Saving benefit) can be his, unless Christ be his; Christ must be ours if his Benefits be ours. Christ is given with his Benefits. *He that hath the Son hath Life, and he that hath not the Son hath not Life.* Now I argue, seeing it is, Faith makes Christ ours, or unites us to him, and before we have Faith we have not Christ, who is had, or made ours, by Faith; this Faith it self cannot be a Benefit purchas'd for us by him, because then we

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must have one of his purchased Saving-benefits before we have Him. We must have Faith (I say) before we have Christ. Faith is this *Condition*. The *Condition* consequently is not, cannot be, one of the *Benefits* flowing from *Christ's* Purchase, but such a Gift (an absolute Gift) as *Christ* himself is, arising merely from God's free Breast altogether.

To inculcate this yet a little, the common Opinion of the Orthodox is, That the Gospel-Covenant is conditional ; That *Faith* therefore must *antecede* the Benefits ; and yet that Faith, or the Condition it self, is purchased by Christ's Redemption for the *Elect*, as well as the Benefits upon condition. When the Question then is ask'd, Whether the *Elect* have any Benefit (any Saving-Benefit) by Christ's death *before* they *believe*, it is such a puzzling and indeed posing Question, as must lead us either into that Point of Antinomianism, that we are in Christ, and justified, before Faith ; or else into this Solution.

And here let me turn and look back, upon occasion of these Third Thoughts on my late Book of *Justification*. To understand aright St. Paul's *Justification by Faith*, we must consider with whom it is he contends. The *Jews* (as the best skill'd in Rabbinical Learning, does tell us) did generally maintain the Doctrine of *Freewill*, not doubting but every one could do as God commanded, if he would himself *, they having no Notion (as *Pelagius* at first) of *Grace* [*All that God hath spoken we will do*] : and having receiv'd the *Law* from God's Mouth, (the Excellency whereof was their Glory) they supposed in the observation of the *outside*, that they kept it, accounting the Reward promised therein due to them thereupon from God, as what in Justice they merited for their Deeds ; inso much as some thought themselves so righteous as not to sin at all, or need Pardon [*Touching the Law, blameless*] ; and others that sinned, being lick'd whole by Sacrifice, they thought all well, boasting themselves as the *Only People*, the *Only Righteous* in the Earth. Not to mention what we all know out of the *Acts*, that some of them that were Converts to Christianity did yet remain of the opinion, that their Law was to be kept. The Apostle now sets himself against these *Jews*, and lets them know that no man, neither *Jew* nor *Gentile*, is *Righteous* in God's sight (whatsoever they were in their own) but that *all have sinned*, and need that *Messias* they expected, to make *Reconciliation* for their Sins ; That our Lord Jesus Christ being that true *Messias*, by his Death answering their Legal Sacrifices, hath born the Curse

* This is the meaning of that Jewish saying, *All things are in the power and disposal of Heaven, except the Fear of God* ; for that they believed was in their own.

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of the *Law*, and so redeemed us from it. That Gods undeserved Goodness here in accepting of Sinners, through this meritorious Sacrifice of his, to Pardon and Life, upon Condition, which he gives the Grace also to perform, presupposed, and by me acknowledged: it is another *Righteousness*, and not that of the Jews (not that *Paul* calls his own, as a Jew), or not a *Righteousness of Works* [perfect Works], but a *Righteousness of Faith*, which makes the Reward only of Grace [of Faith, that it may be of Grace]; of Faith, but a true Faith working by Love, (which is an internal *Righteousness* though imperfect, and not as the external Works of the Jews was) is that *Righteousness of God* in opposition to the terms of the *Law*, whereby we are justified and saved.

The Apostle (I observe) in one place speaking of *Faith*, calls it the *Obedience of Faith*; the same word if you compare one Text [Rom. 11. 30, 31.] with the *Margin*, signifying both to believe and obey. And the People believed God and his Servant Moses. I will conclude hereupon, that Christ's Redemption in the immediate fruit thereof, which is the Grant of a General Pardon through his Satisfaction to all the World on Condition, being laid as a foundation, To be justified by Faith is to be justified by performing the Condition. To be justified by Faith (believe me at present) is in St Paul's Mind to be justified by the Obedience of Faith, which is (in Paul's mind I say, opposing the Jew) by embracing the Christian Religion, and living according to it.

Sir, The Design, Sum, and End of this poor Sheet of mine, and the printing of it, comes all to this. *Opinionum varietas, & Opinatum Unitas, non sunt dissoluta*. In God's Name therefore, do you and your Brethren unite, and re-unite (as much as you will) in Practicals, but forbear, and bear with one another in Opinions: And I pray those who have my late mentioned Book, where they find in the end, a Letter to Mr. Williams, that they will please to finish this Sheet to it.

John Humphrey